

**Figure 12** indicates a cut-away elevation view of Alternative Configuration “D” voided interior **15** in relation to the oak slab **5**.

**Figure 13** indicates an end-on cross-section detail of Alternative Configuration “D” internal void **15** in relation to the oak slab **5**.

**Figure 14** indicates end-on cross-section detail of Alternative Configuration “B” air cap **13** and sealant **16** in relation to oak slab **5** and bores **6**.

**Figure 15** indicates end-on cross-section detail of Alternative Configuration “C” transverse slot **14** in relation to oak slab **5** and bores **6**.

## Claims

With the above disclosures, the following claims are made:

1. A device to pneumatically innerconnect multiple air passages in cored oak slabs used for maturing wine comprised of:
  - a. Impermeable food grade material and
  - b. Air intake and air exit ports to allow connection from one said oak slab to another or to an external air environment and
  - c. A method of sealing said device to said oak slab comprised of a food grade sealant or neoprene grommet.
2. The device in Claim1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by a cast neoprene manifold with ports aligned to match said cores in said oak slabs.
3. The device in Claim1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by air loops constructed of cast neoprene, plastic or stainless steel and connected from one said core to another said cores in said oak slabs.

4. The device in Claim 1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by an air cap constructed of cast neoprene or plastic and placed over said oak cores in said oak slabs.
5. A method for increasing wine/air contact in said oak slabs comprised of transverse slots cut through said oak slabs between said cores.
6. A method for introducing air inside said oak slabs comprised of voided out interior volume of said oak slabs.

#### **General Remarks**

**Conditional Request for Constructive Assistance** – Applicant has submitted the specification and claims of this application so that they are proper, definite and define novel structure which is also unobvious. If for any reason this application is not believed to be in full condition for allowance, applicant respectfully requests the constructive assistance and suggestions of the examiner pursuant to M.P.E.P. ¶ 2173.02 and ¶ 707.07(j) in order that the undersigned can place this application in allowable condition as soon as possible and without need for further proceedings.



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I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of the prior, copending United States application listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a).